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(WGN-AM) - Illinois Rep. Mark Kirk (R-Highland Park) is among a congressional delegation forwarding legislation which aims to increase public transit ridership by offering tax breaks to businesses.

A recent Business Week magazine study shows as many as 50 percent of commuters would take the bus or train if their company offered to offset the cost of their fare as part of the firm's benefits plan. Kirk said he wants to make that a reality.

"We think this will boost ridership, it will save the average Chicagoland family about \$1600 a year on gas and it will help protect our environment," Kirk said.

Kirk also chided governor Rod Blagojevich for what he says is a lackadaisical approach toward securing federal transit funding which could make public transportation more appealing.

"We cannot move forward with the governor's plan to let \$4 billion in federal funding go unclaimed in Washington, D.C.," Kirk added.

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